

## Message Text

PAGE 01 STATE 158064  
ORIGIN SS-15

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /016 R

66011  
DRAFTED BY IO/UNA:BJSHARP  
APPROVED BY IO/UNA:JFTEFFT  
S/S-O:KDSCOTT  
-----016072 220409Z /14  
O 212139Z JUN 78  
FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE 0000

S E C R E T STATE 158064

EXDIS FOR AMB. YOUNG FROM UNA

FOLLOWING REPEAT SANA 2993 SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO JIDDA JUN 20.

QUOTE: S E C R E T SANA 2993

EXDIS

DEPT. PLEASE PASS TO CHUSMTM DHAHRAN, USMTM RIYADH AND  
USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GERMANY

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PEPR, PINT, ZP, YE, SA  
SUBJ: YEMEN'S DILEMMAS OF CHOICE

BEGIN SUMMARY: YAR PRESIDENT GHASHMI SEES YEMEN AT  
CROSSROADS WHERE IT MUST CHOOSE BETWEEN ACCOMMODATION  
OF SOVIETS AND RESISTANCE TO THEM. BUT HE IS LOATH TO  
OPPOSE SOVIETS WHEN HE HAS NO CONFIDENCE IN AMERICAN  
SUPPORT. END SUMMARY.

1. PRESIDENT GHASHMI RECEIVED ME ON 19 JUNE AND AT ONCE,  
SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 158064

EVEN BEFORE TELEVISION CAMERAMEN DEPARTED FROM SCENE AND  
SHASHMI WAS STILL WREATHED IN RITUAL SMILES, HE LEANED  
FORWARD AND SAID "THE RUSSIANS ARE DIRTY BASTARDS BUT THE  
AMERICANS DON'T DO ANYTHING."

2. WITH THE CAMERAMEN GONE, GHASHMI POINTED TO A  
MODEL OF SAM MISSILE ON HIS DESK AND SAID THAT RECENT  
SOVIET MILITARY DELEGATION HAD TOLD EACH ECHELON  
OF MILITARY COMMAND IT WAS PREPARED TO PROVIDE COMPLETELY  
NEW EQUIPMENT OF THE MOST MODERN SORT BUT THAT SUPPLY

WOULD REQUIRE SIGNATURE FROM THE HEADQUARTERS. HE WAS SMILING AND TEASING IN MANNER; I TRIED GO OVER FROM DEFENSE TO OFFENSE JUST AS NICELY.

3. I ASKED GHASHMI IF HE DIDN'T RESENT RUSSIAN EFFORTS OF THIS SORT TO UNDERCUT HIM. GHASHMI SAID OF COURSE HE DID BUT HE DID NOT KNOW WHERE ELSE TO TURN FOR HELP. STRESSING EVERY WORD, HE SAID "I WANT TO GET RID OF THE RUSSIANS BUT I CAN'T DO SO UNLESS I HAVE AN ALTERNATIVE."

4. I RECOUNTED BRIEFLY STEPS WE HAD RECENTLY TAKEN TO RESPOND TO SAUDI REQUESTS FOR TRAINING AND EQUIPMENT TRANSFER I REMINDED HIM SCOPE AND VARIETY OF EQUIPMENT ON WAY AND ASKED GHASHMI IF HE DIDN'T THINK SAUDI SUPPORT WAS INCREASING. HE WAS NONCOMMITAL. I THEN SAID THAT MOST IMPORTANT STEP YEMENIS COULD TAKE DID NOT REQUIRE OUTSIDE HELP EITHER FROM SAUDIS OR FROM SOVIETS BUT COULD BE CARRIED OUT BY YEMENIS THEMSELVES. THIS WAS REORGANIZATION OF UNITS AND GOOD TRAINING PROGRAM.

I SAID NEW SUPPLIES OF EQUIPMENT WOULD QUICKLY FALL APART UNLESS THIS WAS DONE. ARMY WOULD BE WEAKER RATHER THAN STRONGER. HE NODDED AND SAID ARMY WAS RTP WAS WEAKER

SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 158064

NOW THAN IN PAST. HE DID NOT ELABORATE.

5. INSTEAD HE WENT BACK ON ATTACK, SAYING THAT HE HAD REQUESTED US TO PROVIDE CONVERSION TRAINING FOR 20 MIG PILOTS SO THAT THEY COULD PHASE INTO F-5. WHAT WAS OUR RESPONSE? I SAID WE HAD SAME REQUEST FROM SAUDIS AND HAD RESPONDED WITH PLAN TO PROVIDE THIS TRAINING. HE SAID "BUT WHAT IS YOUR RESPONSE TO ME?" I SAID WE SAW PROGRAM OF MILITARY ASSISTANCE AS TRILATERAL RATHER THAN BILATERAL AND THOUGHT ONE OF ITS MOST IMPORTANT ASPECTS WAS COORDINATION BETWEEN SAUDIS, YEMENIS AND UNITED STATES. HOWEVER, WE WILL PROVIDE REQUESTED TRAINING. GHASHMI, STILL SMILING, SHRUGGED BROADLY AND RETURNED TO THE ATTACK.

6. "IF YOU HAVE GOOD RELATIONS WITH THE SAUDIS" --- HE PAUSED AND I NODDED TO INDICATE THAT OUR RELATIONS WERE EXCELLENT --- "THEN YOU SHOULD GET THEM TO HELP US MORE." I ASKED WHAT HE WANTED. "HAVE THEY ASKED YOU TO SELL US AIR-PLANES?" I SAID THEY HAD NOT. AT THIS HE SEEMED STARTLED AND ASKED THE QUESTION AGAIN. I SAID THERE HAD BEEN TALKS TO SUGGEST THAT THEY WOULD ASK US, BUT NO FORMAL REQUEST HAD BEEN MADE. "WHAT ABOUT TANKS?" HE ASKED. I SAID THEY HAVE NEVER DISCUSSED TANKS WITH US, BUT WENT ON TO POINT OUT THAT \$150 MILLION PROGRAM CONTINUED TO BE DELIVERED AT RATE OF 2 OR 3 SHIPS A MONTH IN HODEIDAH. THIS EQUIPMENT, I SAID, WOULD PROVIDE FOR COMPLETE MODERNIZATION OF EQUIPMENT OF 6 YEMENI BRIGADES. IT DID NOT INCLUDE TANKS,

BUT IT INCLUDED ANTI-AIR DEFENSE, ARTILLERY, ANTI-TANK DEFENSE AND VITAL MEANS OF MOBILITY. I SAID PROBLEMS OF ABSORBING THIS EQUIPMENT WOULD BE CONSIDERABLE AND RETURNED TO QUESTION OF TRAINING SAYING THAT 50 PERCENT FAILURE RATE OF YEMENI OFFICERS IN US ENGLISH LANGUAGE SCHOOL WAS HIGHER THAN FAILURE RATE OF SAUDI ENLISTED MEN. I SAID THAT WAS "SCARCELY BELIEVABLE" AND WE WANTED TO BUILD AN ENGLISH LANGUAGE SCHOOL HERE TO EASE THE TRANSITION OF YEMENI STUDENTS TO INSTRUCTION IN THE

SECRET

PAGE 04 STATE 158064

UNITED STATES.

7. "THE SCHOOL," SAID GHASHMI, "IS A LONG WAYS OFF." CLEARLY STUNG BY THE COMPARISON BETWEEN YEMENI AND SAUDI STUDENTS, HE INSISTED THAT THE SOVIETS WERE ABLE TO TRAIN YEMENIS IN RUSSIAN WITHOUT NEARLY AS MUCH DIFFICULTY AS WE HAD TRAINING YEMENIS IN ENGLISH. I SAID THAT MAYBE THAT WAS BECAUSE SOVIETS DIDN'T MAINTAIN HIGH STANDARDS OF ACHIEVEMENT WHEN THEIR CHIEF CONCERN WAS FRIENDS IN YEMEN, ESPECIALLY IN THE OFFICER CORPS. GHASHMI SMILED AGAIN AND NODDED AND SAID THAT HE INTENDED TO MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO CHOOSE THE BEST OFFICERS POSSIBLE TO GO TO THE UNITED STATES FOR TRAINING.

8. HE THEN SAID THAT IN THE SHORT RUN HE WANTED TO SEND 8 OR 9 OFFICERS ON A TOUR OF THE UNITED STATES. HE MENTIONED MOHAMMED DYFULLAH, COMMANDER OF THE AIR FORCE, ALI ABDULLAH SALAH, COMMANDER OF THE MUQD BRIGADE IN TAIZ AND ABDO RAHMAN SAID, MILITARY COMMANDER OF HODEIDAH, AND SOME OTHERS. "THEY NEED TO SPEND SEVERAL WEEKS" IN THE UNITED STATES TO "OPEN THEIR EYES." WITHOUT MENTIONING CONTRADICTORY SAUDI APPROACHES ABOUT MOHAMMED DYFULLAH, I TOLD GHASHMI WE HAD ALREADY REQUESTED TOUR FOR HIS AIR FORCE COMMANDER AND I HOPED IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO GIVE HIM SOME MORE DETAILS SOON. HE ASKED ME IF I AGREED WITH THE TOUR. I SAID IT WAS A GOOD IDEA, BUT THE DECISION ON FUNDING WAS IN THE HANDS OF THE AUTHORITIES IN WASHINGTON. I WOULD, HOWEVER, BE IN TOUCH WITH HIM AS SOON AS I HAD AN ANSWER.

9. AT THIS POINT, I PULLED OUT A COPY OF STATE 153167 AND SAID THAT I WANTED TO TRANSLATE FOR HIM SOME OF ITS

SECRET

PAGE 05 STATE 158064

SECTIONS SINCE IT WAS AN "OFFICIAL MESSAGE" TO THE HEADS OF GOVERNMENT IN THE PENINSULA. HE ASKED IF IT WAS FROM CARTER AND I SAID IT WAS FROM STATE DEPARTMENT IN WASHINGTON, BUT IT CLEARLY REPRESENTED ADMINISTRATION

POLICY. GHASHMI NODDED AND I TRANSLATED FOR HIM PARA 2 DOWN TO THE SUBPARAGRAPH WHICH BEGINS TO DEAL WITH THE PROBLEM IN AFGHANISTAN. I STRESSED THE NEED FOR CLOSE CONSULTATIONS, PARTICULARLY IN THE CASE OF YEMEN WHICH FACES A THREAT FROM THE SOUTH AND ASKED HIM WHAT THE SITUATION WAS IN THE SOUTHERN PART OF THE YAR.

10. HE SAID THAT THE WEEK BEFORE, YEMENI FORCES IN THE DAMT AREA HAD KILLED 170 OF THE MEN TRAINED BY SOUTH YEMEN AND RECENTLY REINTRODUCED INTO THEIR NATIVE COUNTRY TO OPPOSE THE YAR GOVERNMENT. HE INSISTED THAT THE GOVERNMENT FORCES HAD TAKEN NO CASUALTIES. HE HAD USED THE SO-CALLED RESERVE FORCES-A REGULAR ARMY UNIT, THE ARMORED FORCES AND THE BRIGADE CALLED THE GIANTS. I ASKED IF HE THOUGHT THIS WOULD PUT AN END TO THE FIGHTING AND HE SHOOK HIS HEAD GRIMLY. "NO, THE TENSION IS GOING TO INCREASE," HE SAID AND THE PROBLEMS WILL GROW WORSE. HE SAID THE RUSSIANS WERE HELPING THE TRAINING OF THESE ANTI-NORTHERN FORCES AND, IN FACT, WERE PAYING FOR AN INCREASE IN THE PDRY ARMY OF SOME 20,000 MEN, MANY OF THEM ORGINALLY NORTHERNS. I ASKED HIM IF THE RUSSIANS WERE ALSO WORKING AGAINST HIM INSIDE OF YEMEN AND HE NODDED.

11. I THEN SAID THAT YEMEN MIGHT BE AT A CROSSROADS WHERE IT HAD TO DECIDE WHETHER ITS BEST INTERESTS LAY IN ACCOMMODATING THE SOVIETS OR IN RESISTING THEM. SUDDENLY GHASHMI TURNED SERIOUS, ABANDONING THE POSE OF LAUGHTER AND MOCK ATTACKS THAT HE HAD EMPLOYED SO FAR IN THE CONVERSATION. HE THOUGHT FOR A MINUTE, THEN NODDED AND SAID "IF WE THROW OUT THE RUSSIANS AND BREAK WITH THEM, WILL YOU BE WITH US?"

SECRET

PAGE 06 STATE 158064

12. I SAID WE WERE "WITH HIM" BUT MOST IMPORTANT DEFENSE WE HAD AGAINST THE UNLOVED RUSSIANS AND SOUTH YEMENIS WAS THE CLOSE COORDINATION AND SOLIDARITY BETWEEN FRIENDLY STATES ON THE PENINSULA AND THEREFORE THE FIRST STEP WAS CONSULTATIONS TO DEVISE A STRATEGY WHICH WOULD ALLOW US TO CHECK SOVIET AMBITIONS IN THIS AREA. I SAID IT WAS ALL TOO EASY FOR FRIENDS OF YEMEN TO BE CONFUSED BY ITS POLICY OF "BALANCE," WHEN SOVIETS SHIPMENTS OF ARMS TO YEMEN CONTINUE AND IMPORTANT MILITARY DELEGATIONS ARE RECEIVED FROM MOSCOW WITH GREAT PUBLICPTY AND WARMTH. THIS CREATED QUESTIONS IN THE MINDS OF FRIEND WHO ALREADY WERE SUSPICIOUS OF THE ACTIVITIES OF 150-MAN SOVIET MILITARY MISSION IN THE COUNTRY. IT WAS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT TO HAVE A CLEAR POLICY. THE THREATS TO YEMEN WERE CLEAR. WHAT WAS YEMEN'S STRATEGY IN DEALING WITH THESE THREATS? I SAID THE GOVERNMENT OF YEMEN SHOULD MAKE UP ITS MIND ABOUT HOW TO PROCEED AND THEN LET US KNOW. WE WERE VERY INTERESTED. I THEN REMINDED HIM

OF THE STATEMENT THAT THE USG WAS "VIGILANT TO NEED TO RESPOND APPROPRIATELY AND FIRMLY TO SOVIET STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS WHICH SEEK TO ALTER GLOBAL BALANCE AND DESTABILIZE POLITICAL SECURITY SITUATION IN AFRICA AND ELSEWHERE."

13. GHASHMI THEN BEGAN ASKING ABOUT SAID BARRE AND SADAT. WHAT HAD WE DONE TO SUPPORT THEM? HE CLEARLY SAW THEM AS LEADERS WHO HAD THROWN IN THEIR LOT WITH THE UNITED STATES BUT THEN HAD NOT RPT NOT RECEIVED ADEQUATE SUPPORT IN RETURN. I SAID IN REPLY THAT OUR COMMITMENTS TO PEACE SETTLEMENT WAS SOLID AND I POINTED TO US QUESTIONS WHICH ISRAELI CABINET WAS THRASHING OUT AND SAID I EXPECTED US TO PLAY FURTHER

SECRET

PAGE 07 STATE 158064

ROLE AS INTERMEDIARY ON ANY SENSITIVE QUESTIONS. PROGRESS COULD NOT OCCUR OVERNIGHT. AS FOR SOMALIA,

THAT WAS COUNTRY WHICH HAD INVADED ITS NEIGHBOR. COUNTRIES WITH THREAT OF INVASION OR SUBVERSION FROM NEIGHBORS, LIKE YEMEN, WERE IN DIFFERENT SITUATION. WE HAD NEVER MADE PROMISE OF SUPPORT TO SAID. WHEN WE DID MAKE PROMISES, HOWEVER, WE KEPT THEM.

COMMENT: CONVERSATION LASTED ABOUT 45 MINUTES. HIS QUESTIONS WERE SHARP, HIS MANNER WARM. I COUNTER-PUNCHED, SMILING. THROUGHOUT, WHETHER MOOD WAS ARGUMENTATIVE BANTER OR SERIOUS, IT WAS CLEAR GHASHMI WAS LOOKING FOR HELP. HE DOES NOT FEEL HE CAN DEPEND UPON SUPPORT FROM US OR SAUDIS IN ESCALATING CONFLICT WITH SOUTH YEMENIS AND SOVIETS. HE WANTS TWO THINGS OF US -- A DIRECT RELATIONSHIP IN MILITARY SUPPLY AND US INFLUENCE ON THE SAUDIS TO RATIONALIZE MILITARY AND CIVILIAN ASSISTANCE HERE. ALL I CONVEYED, OF COURSE, WAS GOOD WILL AND SERIOUS CONCERN. I DON'T THINK ANYTHING I SAID CHANGED HIS VIEW, SPOKEN WITH SOLDIERLY BLUNTNES, THAT THE RUSSIANS ARE "BASTARDS" BUT AMERICANS NOT LIKELY TO DO ANYTHING. NEVERTHELESS, HE ALSO SUGGESTED WE MEET AGAIN SOON, "WITHIN NEXT TWO WEEKS," TO TALK FURTHER ABOUT YEMEN'S DILEMMAS OF CHOICE.

RANSOM

UNQUOTE VANCE

SECRET

<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptoning:** Z  
**Capture Date:** 26 sep 1999  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** MILITARY ASSISTANCE, MILITARY TRAINING, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 21 jun 1978  
**Decapton Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Decapton Note:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1978STATE158064  
**Document Source:** ADS  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** IO/UNA:BJSHARP  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** 11652 GDS  
**Errors:** n/a  
**Expiration:**  
**Film Number:** D780259-0930  
**Format:** TEL  
**From:** STATE  
**Handling Restrictions:**  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1978/newtext/t197806115/baaaezai.tel  
**Line Count:** 265  
**Litigation Code IDs:**  
**Litigation Codes:**  
**Litigation History:**  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, TEXT ON MICROFILM  
**Message ID:** 0c324f7e-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Office:** ORIGIN SS  
**Original Classification:** SECRET  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** EXDIS  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 5  
**Previous Channel Indicators:**  
**Previous Classification:** SECRET  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** EXDIS  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Retention:** 0  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 07 jun 2005  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**SAS ID:** 2177954  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** YEMEN'S DILEMMAS OF CHOICE  
**TAGS:** PEPR, PINT, MASS, ZP, YE, SA, US, UR, (RANSOM, DAVID M), (AL-GHASHMI, AHMAD)  
**To:** n/a INFO USUN N Y  
**Type:** TE  
**vdkgvgwkey:** odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS\_Docs/0c324f7e-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Review Markings:**  
Sheryl P. Walter  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
20 Mar 2014  
**Markings:** Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014